

helped over 1,500 veterans in New York State battling PTSD and TBI.

With the success that we have had in New York, I know that, if we make this program national, we will ensure that every veteran across America will eventually have access to a peer-to-peer support group.

With the VA reporting that an estimated 22 veterans a day commit suicide, this national effort is long overdue. We must ensure that all veterans across America receive the proper care they need and deserve.

I will be working hard to spread awareness of my bill, gather cosponsors and the support of veteran groups and mental health organizations from all across the country so that we can pass this bill as soon as possible.

#### WE MUST ACT NOW ON THE ZIKA VIRUS

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, shifting gears, on a completely separate topic, I also rise today to discuss the mosquito-borne Zika virus, which has spread at rapid rates across South America, Central America, and the Caribbean, infecting individuals in more than 25 countries.

Zika has caused widespread alarm across the global community after Brazil reported a rise in the reported cases of microcephaly, a disease that leads tragically to a baby being born with an unusually small head and brain damage.

What is so concerning about the Zika virus is how easily it can spread. The virus is spread not only through a mosquito bite, but also by contact with infected blood or sexual contact.

Furthermore, there is currently no vaccine to prevent or any medicine to treat the virus. All these factors have led the World Health Organization to declare the Zika virus a public health emergency.

Confirmed cases of the Zika virus have been popping up across the U.S., including at least three confirmed cases in my home district of Suffolk County, Long Island.

With the recent outbreaks and the number of Zika cases among travelers visiting or returning to the United States, it is only a matter of time before this becomes a widespread epidemic right here at home. This is why we must act now.

I recently introduced legislation, the Counterterrorism Screening and Assistance Act of 2016, H.R. 4314, which passed the House Committee on Foreign Affairs with bipartisan support.

One key aspect of this legislation is that the bill would put in place a monitoring system that would screen for infectious diseases abroad to contain and prevent any potential outbreaks.

The bill also helps quarantine the virus, authorizing the Secretary of Homeland Security to provide equipment and supplies to mitigate the risk or threat of infectious diseases such as Zika.

This is a measure that is long overdue to protect not only our homeland from terrorism, but also to ensure that

we are prepared to combat the spread of any infectious diseases. With this bill's passage out of committee, it is clear that my colleagues in Congress share my view.

I will continue to push for full passage of my Counterterrorism Screening and Assistance Act in the House and urge my colleagues to bring this bipartisan bill to the House floor for a vote.

#### COMBATING BDS ACT OF 2016

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DOLD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, in recent years, the boycott, divestment, and sanctions movement, more commonly known as the BDS movement, has been employed as a hateful weapon to delegitimize the State of Israel and all those who stand with her.

The BDS movement has neither brought Israelis and Palestinians closer to peace nor advanced the laudable goal of improving dialogue between the supporters of both sides. Instead, it has served as a means to demagogue Israel and inflame tensions in communities and college campuses around our Nation.

Rather than sit back and react to the BDS movement's aggressive efforts to foment hatred for Israel, it is time to take charge and simply say: "Enough." It is time to go on offense against the BDS movement's ongoing economic warfare targeting Israel.

That is why I am proud to announce the Combating BDS Act of 2016, bipartisan legislation that I am introducing with the gentleman from California (Mr. VARGAS), a courageous leader in the anti-BDS movement.

The Combating BDS Act of 2016 affirms on the Federal level the authority of State and local governments to divest public funds or entities that engage in commerce or investment-related boycott, divestment, or sanctions activity targeting Israel.

Here is why this idea is so important. Similar to previous local efforts to divest from companies doing business with Iran, we are now seeing a growing movement in State and local governments throughout the Nation to enact measures to divest public funds from entities participating in anti-Israel BDS.

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The Combating BDS Act of 2016 strengthens these efforts by affirming the legal authority of State and local governments to act on divestment without running afoul of any potential Federal limitations.

This important legislation empowers community leaders and individuals who seek to counter the hateful targeting and delegitimization against Israel, and it sends an unquestionable message about where the United States Congress stands on BDS.

This is not about left versus right. This is about right versus wrong. It

must remain bipartisan. As the author of the Combating BDS Act of 2016, I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to advance this powerful and important legislation.

#### IRAN'S HOSTILITY MUST BE COMBATED

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the Islamic Republic of Iran—its past and its future.

February 11 is just an ordinary day for Americans, but in Iran, tomorrow is anything but ordinary. Military parades and massive state-sponsored celebrations fill the streets of Tehran and cities across the Islamic Republic. In just a few hours, it will be Islamic Revolution's Victory Day in Iran. The regime celebrates 37 years since the violent coup that brought the Ayatollah Khomeini to power and transferred Iran into a fundamentalist Islamic theocracy and the world's largest state sponsor of terrorism.

It is a dark period of history, Mr. Speaker. Thousands of innocent people were killed as the revolutionaries consolidated power. The U.S. Embassy was overrun and more than 50 Americans were held hostage for 444 days.

The United States has seen six Presidents since 1979, reflecting a broad range of leadership styles and governing philosophies. The Islamic Republic has been led by two Supreme Leaders, both zealots fanatically committed to the revolutionary ideas they espouse being celebrated on the streets of Tehran on this day. Make no mistake, Mr. Speaker, we are dealing with the same Iran today as we were in 1979.

The only day being celebrated by some Americans at the moment is implementation day, as President Obama's dangerous nuclear deal has now come and gone. The world is much more dangerous because of it.

Iran, the leading patron of global terrorism, just received a \$100 billion check. The mullahs continue to foment violence and chaos across the Middle East, and their nuclear structure remains intact. The Obama administration has long argued that we would only be giving them \$50 billion, but even they have conceded that it is closer to \$100 billion or more.

We were also told that Iran would moderate its behavior as a result of this capitulation. Just in the past few weeks, Iran captured and humiliated American sailors, illegally launched ballistic missiles, fired rockets within 1,500 yards of U.S. ships, and flew a drone over a U.S. aircraft carrier. The list goes on and on.

Iranian Special Forces continue to assist al-Assad in his slaughter of innocents in Syria. Over 200,000 have been killed so far. Iranian-backed militias are likely responsible for kidnapping three American contractors in Iraq.

It doesn't take much imagination to figure out what Iran will do with another \$100 billion, which is the windfall that they are about to receive based on this bad deal. As President Obama and Secretary Kerry have both begrudgingly admitted, it is nearly certain that the Iranians will use this money to sow the seeds of even more death and destruction. Think about that. They are nearly certain that part of this \$100 billion will go there.

The Islamic Republic is not our friend, Mr. Speaker. It is a dangerous geopolitical foe. It is led by a cult of extremists that are hellbent on our annihilation. Yet President Obama will do nothing to stem the tide of the Ayatollah's ambitions.

When faced with an adversary whose theology and eschatology are fundamentally incompatible with peace and world order, the United States, under President Obama's leadership, chose a path of appeasement. I truly believe President Obama has made perhaps the most dangerous foreign policy blunder in our lifetime. We are now facing a newly emboldened, cash-rich, radical Islamic regime fully committed to weakening our Nation, terrorizing the West, and destroying our way of life.

Mr. Speaker, it is up to Congress to do everything in our power to keep as much of this money as possible out of the hands of Iran's terrorist proxies. The Congress must move swiftly to strengthen terrorism- and human rights-related sanctions against Iran and its Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. The Congress must maintain strict oversight over Iran's nuclear program as its infrastructure remains intact.

Iran's hostility must be combated, Mr. Speaker, and this body should not abrogate that responsibility, even if our President already has.

#### SARACINI AVIATION SAFETY ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, in light of recent reports of ISIS entering Europe disguised as refugees and a terrorist having just tried to take down an aircraft, I think it is important to understand the threats we face, but also to learn from the past.

In the 9/11 Report, al Qaeda mastermind Khalid Sheikh Mohammed told al Qaeda terrorists to watch the cockpit doors at takeoff and landing to observe whether the captain went into the lavatory during the flight and to note whether the flight attendants brought food into the cockpit.

We all know what happened when these attackers stormed the flight deck and turned our airliners into weapons of war. But today, more than 14 years after the attacks of September 11, the FAA still admits the cockpit is vulnerable when the reinforced door has to be opened. That is unacceptable.

We know that terrorists study our vulnerabilities and make their plans accordingly. Yet, even after the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission emphasized the importance of "a layered security system," we have not taken the simple, cost-effective step to protect the skies above us with the installation of secondary barrier doors.

These lightweight, wire-mesh gates can be closed whenever the cockpit door is opened and effectively protect against a terrorist—or team of terrorists—rushing the cockpit by providing the pilot enough time to recognize the threat and reenter and lock the reinforced cockpit door. They are easy to deploy and stow, and provide the "layered protection" that experts agree is needed.

That is why I have introduced the Saracini Aviation Safety Act. This is a one-page bill named after my constituent, United Airlines pilot Victor J. Saracini, whose life was taken when his aircraft was hijacked and flown into the South Tower of the World Trade Center on September 11. It requires that these cost-effective secondary barriers be included on large passenger aircraft.

We promised to never forget those lost on 9/11 and the lessons learned by all of us on that tragic day; yet after many years and more than 40 hijacking attempts around the world, including five that were successful, we are still not taking this threat seriously.

Mr. Speaker, I will continue to advocate for the adoption of this common-sense policy, both as a stand-alone bill or as part of a larger piece of legislation like the FAA reauthorization, and I urge my colleagues to join me.

#### GTMO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PERRY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, one of the most oft-repeated campaign promises from President Obama's 2008 campaign was his determination to close the U.S. Guantanamo Bay detention facility.

Congress, a coequal branch of government representing each citizen and re-elected every 2 years, hasn't come to the same conclusion as President Obama about the status of GTMO moving forward. Because of this, we have blocked funding for its closure year after year after year.

We have strong reasons for concern. Last September, the Director of National Intelligence reported that 117 transferred detainees are confirmed to be reengaging in terrorist activities, with another 79 suspected to have done so. Disturbingly, this amounts to a full 30 percent of transferred detainees either confirmed or suspected of reengaging in terrorist activities.

The Director's report clearly shows that the detainee transfer process is obviously deeply flawed and poses a significant unnecessary and unaccept-

able risk to the security of our Nation and, quite frankly, the world.

The high percentage of reengagement clearly exposes the fact that we have just simply failed to properly identify the threat posed by transferred detainees and provide necessary safeguards to protect our citizens—safeguards that should have been in place before one single transfer ever took place.

Given the dire national security implications posed by these detainee transfers, I, along with 23 of my colleagues in this House, sent a letter last week to President Obama requesting to see the terms of agreements made with countries where detainees have and will be transferred.

There are 55 countries, by the way, including the likes of Yemen, Somalia, Pakistan, Libya, Iraq, and Iran. Yemen, really? Libya is a failed state—which we may have had a great part in creating—and we are sending terrorists there to be detained? Think about it. What incentive would it take for you to bring a terrorist to your country? to your neighborhood? to your home?

In particular, I am interested in the agreements' provisions to mitigate the inherent danger posed by detainee transfers. Specifically, what were the provisions aimed at preventing reengagement? Were there any? How did we ensure accountability by the home countries? What did these nations do to prevent contact with known terrorists, especially in countries that are full of terrorists, like Yemen or Somalia? How did we ensure these countries offer no form of aid and assistance to terrorist organizations?

The President says detaining these people is a recruiting magnet. Well, I wonder if we shouldn't detain gang members in our country. It is a right of passage to go to prison if you are in a gang. Should we let them all out, too? According to that logic, incarcerating them creates more of them.

He also says that detaining them indefinitely, without a trial, violates America's principles. You know what? He is right. You ought to ask yourselves as taxpayers: Why did we pay millions of dollars for a state-of-the-art court facility for sensitive and top-secret information during a trial, and yet no one has been put on trial? It is right there next to the detention facility. I walked through it myself. Why can't the military tribunals take place so we can find out what the deal is with these people and have them incarcerated correctly or set them free? It doesn't happen at all.

President Obama declared to America in 2013 that his administration is "the most transparent administration in history." I will take some issue with that. Despite that fact, the President has clearly not lived up to this standard recently.

I sincerely hope that the President will give his promise of transparency higher priority than the priority given to unilaterally closing GTMO as part of a final-year, legacy-driven agenda. It is